

What Works Clearinghouse



YouthBuild

Effectiveness¹ No studies of *YouthBuild* that fall within the scope of the Dropout Prevention review protocol meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. The lack of studies meeting WWC evidence standards means that, at this time, the WWC is unable to draw any conclusions based on research about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of *YouthBuild*.

Program Description²

YouthBuild offers low-income youth both education and job training services. *YouthBuild*'s education component emphasizes attaining a GED or high school diploma, typically in alternative schools with small class sizes and an emphasis on individualized instruction. In *YouthBuild*'s job-training program, participants work in construction jobs building affordable housing for low-income and homeless people in their communities. *YouthBuild* is targeted to youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who are from low-income families and who have demonstrated educational need, typically by being high school dropouts. Participants spend six months to

two years in the program. During this time, they alternate weeks between being full-time students and working full-time in the job-training program. Throughout the program, youth participate in counseling, peer support groups, and life-planning exercises that are intended to encourage them to overcome negative habits and pursue life goals. *YouthBuild* programs are typically sponsored by community- or faith-based organizations. These programs are linked by a centralized national office that provides implementation support to local *YouthBuild* sites, such as staff training and information on best practices and program innovations.

The WWC identified 32 studies of *YouthBuild* that were published or released between 1996 and 2009.

Three studies are within the scope of the review protocol but do not meet WWC evidence standards because they use a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.

Twenty-five studies are out of the scope of the review protocol because they have an ineligible study design; these studies did not use a comparison group.

Four studies are out of the scope of the review, as defined by the Dropout Prevention protocol, for reasons other than study design. Of these, three studies do not include an outcome within a domain specified in the protocol, and one study does not present primary research.

1. The studies in this report were reviewed using WWC Evidence Standards, Version 2.0 (see the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Chapter III).
2. The descriptive information for this program was obtained from a publicly available source: the program's website (<http://www.youthbuild.org>, downloaded July 2009). The WWC requests developers to review the program description sections for accuracy from their perspective. Further verification of the accuracy of the descriptive information for this program is beyond the scope of this review.

References Studies that fall outside the Dropout Prevention review protocol or do not meet WWC evidence standards

Abrazaldo, W., Adefuin, J., Henderson-Frakes, J., Lea, C., Leufgen, J., Lewis-Charp, H., Soukamneuth, S., & Wiegard, A. (2009). *Evaluation of the YouthBuild youth offender grants*. Washington, DC, Oakland, CA: U.S. Department of Labor/ETA, Social Policy Research Associates. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Abyssinian Development Corporation. (2009). *Abyssinian Development Corporation 2008 highlights*. New York, NY: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Autrey, J. H. (1999). Effects of direct instruction and precision teaching on achievement and persistence of adult learners (Doctoral dissertation, Wayne State University, 1999). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 60(06), 1863A. The study is ineligible for review because it does not include an outcome within a domain specified in the protocol.

Capital Area Workforce Development Board. (2008). *Annual report 2007–2008*. Raleigh, NC: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Cohen, M. A., & Piquero, A. R. (2008). *Costs and benefits of a targeted intervention program for youthful offenders: The YouthBuild USA offender project*. Somerville, MA: YouthBuild USA. The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because it uses a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Education. (2008). *Charter annual report: Crispus Attucks Youthbuild*. CS. Harrisburg, PA: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Education. (2007). *Charter annual report: Crispus Attucks Youthbuild*

CS. Harrisburg, PA: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

David, J. E., Hahn, A. B., Horvat, E. M., Bennett, A., & Stoneman, D. (2004). *Forum brief: "Why do some programs for out-of-school youth succeed?"* In cooperation with the National Youth Employment Coalition and YouthBuild USA. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. The study is ineligible for review because it is not a primary analysis of the effectiveness of an intervention such as a meta-analysis or research literature review.

Ferguson, R. F., Clay, P. L., Snipes, J. C., & Roaf, P. (1996). *YouthBuild in developmental perspective: A formative evaluation of the YouthBuild demonstration project*. Cambridge, MA: Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because it uses a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.

Hahn, A., Leavitt, T. D., Horvat, E. M., & Davis, J. E. (2004). *Life after YouthBuild: 900 YouthBuild graduates reflect on their lives, dreams, and experiences*. Somerville, MA: YouthBuild USA. The study is ineligible for review because it does not include an outcome within a domain specified in the protocol.

Illinois Department of Human Services. (2007). *YouthBuild 2007 annual report*. Chicago, IL: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Latin American Youth Center YouthBuild Public Charter School. (2008). *LAYC YouthBuild public charter school annual report 2007–2008*. Washington, DC: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Leslie, A. (2007). *YouthBuild USA youthful offender project: Year 1*. Somerville, MA: YouthBuild USA. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Minnesota Department of Economic Security. (2003). *Minnesota YouthBuild program: A measurement of costs and benefits to the state of Minnesota*. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota YouthBuild

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- Coalition. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Minnesota Department of Economic Security, Workforce Services Branch, Office of Youth Development. (2002). *2001 YouthBuild program overview*. St. Paul, MN: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Minnesota Department of Economic Security, Office of Youth Development. (2003). *2002 Minnesota YouthBuild report*. St. Paul, MN: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Office of Community-Based Services. (2004). *2003 Minnesota YouthBuild report*. St. Paul, MN: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Office of Community-Based Services. (2005). *2004 Minnesota YouthBuild report*. St. Paul, MN: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Workforce Development Division, Youth Development Unit. (2006). *2005 annual report for Minnesota YouthBuild*. St. Paul, MN: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Workforce Development Division, Office of Youth Development. (2006). *2006 YouthBuild annual report*. St. Paul, MN: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Workforce Development Division, Office of Youth Development. (2008). *2007 Minnesota YouthBuild annual report*. St. Paul, MN: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Workforce Development Division, Office of Youth Development. (2009). *2008 YouthBuild annual report*. St. Paul, MN: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Mitchell, M. V., Jenkins, D., Nguyen, D., Lerman, A., & DeBerry, M. (2003). *Evaluation of the YouthBuild program*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research. The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because it uses a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.
- Northeast Parent and Child Society. (2008). *Northeast Parent and Child Society annual outcome report to the Board of Directors, 2007–2008*. Schenectady, NY: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- San Jose Conservation Corps & Charter School. (2005). *Changing lives, educating the workforce of our future: 2004–2005 annual report*. San Jose, CA: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Whitten, K. S. (2007). Social capital networks of institutional agents and the empowerment of low-status youth in a federally funded intervention program (Doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California, 2007). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 69, 117A. The study is ineligible for review because it does not include an outcome within a domain specified in the protocol.
- Wright, A. (2001). Forum brief: “*The YouthBuild welfare-to-work program: Its outcomes and policy implications*.” Somerville, MA: YouthBuild USA. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School. (2007). *YouthBuild Philadelphia charter school annual report 2005–06*. Philadelphia, PA: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

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YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School. (2009). *YouthBuild Philadelphia charter school annual report 2007–08*. Philadelphia, PA: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

YouthBuild USA. (2005). *YouthBuild USA annual report 2004: Rebuilding communities, transforming lives*. Somerville, MA: YouthBuild USA. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

YouthBuild USA. (2006). *YouthBuild USA 2005 annual report: Rebuilding our communities and our lives*. Somerville, MA: YouthBuild USA. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

YouthBuild USA. (2007). *YouthBuild USA 2006 annual report: YouthBuild rebuilds what Katrina tore down*. Somerville, MA: YouthBuild USA. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.